

with school closures but only if they are Federal employees. To all the parents without government jobs, no such luck.

There are provisions to let abortion providers raid the small business rescue funds that were meant for Main Street businesses.

They want to pay people a bonus not to go back to work when we are trying to rebuild our economy.

There is an effort to create a brandnew, sprawling cash welfare program—not the one-time checks but constant payments—that ignores the pro-work lessons of bipartisan welfare reform and which the White House has already stated they want to make permanent.

The unrelated liberal policies are simply endless. It is like they have forgotten we have a pandemic to fight.

Larry Summers, a top economist in both the Clinton and Obama administrations, says this plan piles way more debt on our kids and grandkids than we need to spend right now. That is Larry Summers, Bill Clinton's Secretary Treasury. Jason Furman, who chaired President Obama's Council of Economic Advisers, said the State and local bailouts are "overkill." These are liberal economists, Madam President.

By one analysis, the Democrats' extra cash bonuses for laid-off workers who stay home will result in almost 60 percent of workers earning more money staying home than they would earn from returning to work—more money by staying home than they would earn from returning to work. What a great idea. This isn't State unemployment insurance; it is borrowing from our kids and grandkids to pay yet an additional cash bonus for not working.

This would extend deep into 2021, when we anticipate serious job growth. Just this morning, we had a jobs report that shattered expectations, nearly doubling the job growth experts had expected to see.

This is what the Washington Post says about this mess. This is the Washington Post about this mess that is before us:

For policy experts and even members of Biden's own party, the improving picture is raising questions about whether the stimulus bill is mismatched to the needs of the current moment.

That is from the Washington Post editorial.

It is mismatched all right because it was never designed to meet Americans' needs. The goal was to "restructure things to fit" their "vision." That is why there was no bipartisan process after a year of completely bipartisan COVID bills that we worked on together. That is why the Senate Republicans who went to the White House to propose working together were told: No thanks; take it or leave it.

This is such a poorly targeted rush job that Democrats can't even settle on one set of political spin. The White House Chief of Staff is going around

town admitting that they have written "the most progressive domestic legislation in a generation." That is the White House Chief of Staff. Meanwhile, here in the Senate, Democrats are still pretending this is some down-the-middle proposal and lecturing us for not supporting it. They can't even get their stories straight.

The administration campaigned on ushering in a new day of unity and bipartisanship, but in 2020, under Republican leadership, the Senate negotiated five rescue bills totaling \$4 trillion, and none of them got fewer than 90 votes. That is how this Senate was run last year in a time of divided government, and now, in this supposed new era of healing leadership, we are about to watch one party ram through a partisan package on the thinnest margins. Go figure.

Republicans have many ideas to improve the bill, many ideas, and we are about to vote on all kinds of amendments in the hopes that some of these ideas make it into the final product. We are going to try to improve the bill. The millions who elected 50 Republican Senators will have their voices heard loud and clear.

Our country is already set for a roaring recovery. We are already on track to bounce back from this crisis. That is not because of this bill; it is because of our work last year. This is a trend this new Democratic government inherited. We are going to come roaring back and mostly not because of this bill—in fact, in some ways, in spite of this bill. It will be because of the bipartisan foundation we laid last year and the strength and resilience of our people. Democrats inherited a tide that was already turning.

We could have worked together to do something smart to finish this fight as fast as possible. Democrats decided to do something else.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore.

Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 1319, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1319) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to title II of S. Con. Res. 5.

Pending:

Schumer amendment No. 891, of a perfecting nature.

Prior to the consideration of this measure, the Senate took the following action: By 51 yeas to 50 nays, Vice President voting yea (Vote No. 73), the

Senate agreed to the motion to proceed to consideration of the bill.

A unanimous-consent-time agreement was reached providing for further consideration of the bill at approximately 9 a.m., on Friday, March 5, 2021; that there be 3 hours of debate remaining, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two managers or their designees; and that it be in order for Senator SANDERS to offer the first amendment.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Vermont.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENTS

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that for the duration of the Senate's consideration of H.R. 1319, the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, the majority and Republican managers of the bill, while seated or standing at the managers' desks, be permitted to deliver floor remarks, retrieve, review, and edit documents, and send email and other data communications from text displayed on wireless personal digital assistant devices and tablet devices.

What do we think about that?

All right. I further ask unanimous consent that the use of calculators be permitted on the floor during consideration of the bill; further, that the staff be permitted to make technical and conforming changes to the bill, if necessary, consistent with the amendments adopted during Senate consideration of the bill.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 972 TO AMENDMENT NO. 891
(Purpose: To provide for increases in the Federal minimum wage)

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I call up my amendment No. 972.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Vermont [Mr. SANDERS], for himself and others, proposes an amendment numbered 972 to amendment No. 891.

Mr. SANDERS. I ask unanimous consent that the reading of the amendment be dispensed with.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The amendment is printed in today's RECORD under "Text of Amendments.")

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I rise to offer an amendment to increase the Federal minimum wage from a starvation wage of \$7.25 an hour to \$15 an hour over a 5-year period.

As I think you know, Congress has not raised the minimum wage since 2007. The result of that is that half of our people are now living paycheck to paycheck, and many, in fact, are working for wages that are much too low in order to take care of their families. So, to my mind, the American people in poll after poll and State after State understand that we have to raise that minimum wage to a living wage of 15 bucks an hour. I intend to do everything that I can to make that happen, and I will be offering that amendment this morning.